

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday, August 4, 2016
Mansfield Town Hall
Town Council Chambers**

4:00 PM

MINUTES

Present: Steve Bacon, Anne D'Alleva, Matt Hart, George Jones, June Krisch, Bonnie Kumiega, Toni Moran, Bob Niderno, Diana Pelletier, Anthony Raggi, Paul Shapiro, and Steve Smith

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

Partnership Attorney: John Zaccaro

Guest: Francine Christiansen with Christiansen Consulting

1. Call to Order – Welcome new Board members

President Steve Bacon called the meeting to order at 4:09 pm.

Mr. Bacon welcomed new Board members Bob Niderno, Anthony Raggi, and Steve Smith. All Board members introduced themselves.

2. Opportunity for Public to Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes of June 2, 2016, and June 15, 2016 (two sets)

George Jones made a motion to approve the minutes of June 2, 2016. Matt Hart seconded the motion. Diana Pelletier abstained. The motion was approved with the one abstention.

Ms. Pelletier made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2016 meeting which occurred at 5:45 pm. Anne D'Alleva seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Paul Shapiro made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2016 meeting which occurred at 7:45 pm. Mr. Hart seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

4. Executive Director Report

Ms. van Zelm asked for Board volunteers to staff the Partnership table at the Festival and passed around a sign-up sheet.

She provided the following updates on tenanting for Phase 2 and the status of Main Street Homes. Amazon will open on August 9; the grand opening is scheduled for August 23rd. The Leyland and Partnership team will be working with Amazon on outreach for the 23rd (*correction – grand opening is August 24*). Tang won't open until early December. Toasted has started construction and the opening is planned for early to mid-September. Grille 86 restaurant is under design. It will probably open late November/early December. CME (engineering firm) is under design with an estimated opening in late October.

There are 5 homes remaining to be sold in Main Street Homes. Construction is moving along on all homes and the clubhouse building. Closings are scheduled to take place each month between now and the end of the year.

Ms. van Zelm said Kathleen Paterson did a great job with the summer concert series. The last movie of the summer is "E.T." on August 19.

Ms. van Zelm said that Mike Izadi, who is a graduate student at UConn, will be leaving in a few weeks. She has been working with the Mansfield Public Library on a staffing model where Library employees will take on some of the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center/Library Express responsibilities. Ms. van Zelm is looking for an Administrative Assistant to work 19 hours – 10 hours in the office and 9 hours on the NZTC desk.

Ms. van Zelm said that parking continues to be a priority. She said that the change from 2 hour parking to 30 minute parking on all the streets in Storrs Center met resistance from visitors and businesses. Today, the Traffic Authority voted to change some previous 2 hour parking to 1 hour parking. Ms. van Zelm will work on a communications plan to get the word out. Mr. Hart said there was good reason to go to 30 minutes due to a few issues including the length of time people were parking without moving their cars, preventing in an out traffic, and consistency with parking time periods. However, there were several complaints so the change was necessary.

5. Review of DRAFT Strategic Plan and Next Steps

The Partnership's strategic planning consultant Francine Christiansen reviewed components of the draft Strategic Plan.

Ms. Christiansen reviewed the Strategic Framework that had been developed. She noted that the mission has not changed as part of the process. The focus now is on promotion, management, and development with development taking a "back seat."

Betsy Paterson said events are important to bring people downtown and that it should become second nature to come to an event either downtown or in town and utilize the services of the

downtown, especially the restaurants. Ms. Christiansen agreed but suggested that the businesses need to be surveyed as to which events benefit them – in other words the events need to have a means to an ends.

Ms. Christiansen said one of the key elements of the draft Plan is work on governance. The Partnership will benefit from an MOU between the Town and UConn on what the Partnership will do and how much the two entities will contribute.

Ms. Christiansen said the draft Plan suggests eliminating all committees except for the Finance and Growth (new name), Governance (new) and Executive. Task forces have been recommended for Governance, and Positioning that would have clear objectives and be limited in terms of how long they would be in effect. The Governance Task Force will take these suggestions about committee make-up under consideration. Ms. Christiansen advocated for looking at the type of committees every year, and noted that the trend for boards is to develop discrete task forces.

Mr. Hart asked where the fee for service for the Partnership to potentially provide economic development services in other areas of town (if asked) would fall. Ms. Christiansen said this could fall under Governance as it is a sustainability issue for the Partnership. She and Ms. van Zelm will look at this further. Mr. Hart reiterated his interest in possibly leveraging the Partnership's resources to assist in other areas of town. Ms. Christiansen suggested that this be addressed under the issue of sustainability and growth of the Partnership and the proposed MOU between the Partnership, Town and UConn.

Ms. Christiansen then reviewed the draft brand – or promise the Partnership makes to the community.

Ms. Christiansen said a Governance Committee would also look at the number of Board members. The draft Strategic Plan proposes reducing the number of Board members by attrition. Mr. Bacon said part of the impetus for a smaller Board is the difficulty in getting a quorum. He said the Governance Task Force will review the bylaws in terms of what constitutes a quorum. Overall, the Task Force will look at what is the best way for the Partnership to be structured to meet its current and future goals. How is the Board most effective and efficient?

Betsy Paterson asked how the Celebrate Mansfield Festival subcommittee would fit into the organizational structure. Ms. Christiansen said it could still be a subcommittee – perhaps as part of Governance?

Ms. Christiansen discussed the concept of the Partnership charging a fee for service for tasks such as work outside the downtown area. It allows the Partnership to do more.

With respect to positioning the Partnership and the downtown going forward, Ms. Christiansen noted that the draft strategic plan recommends hiring a consultant. She said the Town is also

looking at some branding and she advocated that the Partnership and the Town work together. Mr. Hart said the Economic Development Commission is looking at branding the town not just as a good place for business but also as a good place to live.

Mr. Bacon said the Governance Task Force would bring recommendations back to the Board especially any bylaws changes.

Ms. Christiansen said she and Ms. van Zelm will continue to work on implementation of the strategic plan next week.

Mr. Bacon asked Board members to think about where they may want to serve on task forces or committees.

Mr. Hart said the draft Strategic Plan resonates with him and he commended Ms. Christiansen for her work.

Ms. Shapiro asked who would be signatories to the MOU. Mr. Hart suggested it be a three party agreement between the Town, UConn and the Partnership. Ms. Christiansen said the financial commitment piece is important but the MOU also needs to include the substance of what each entity will commit to over a particular time period.

Ms. van Zelm said she and Ms. Christiansen will bring a final Strategic Plan to the Board for its approval at the September Board meeting.

6. Appointment of Committee Chairs and Members for FY2016-2017

June Krisch made a motion to appoint the attached list of Mansfield Downtown Partnership Committee Chairs and Members until the end of the Partnership's fiscal year on June 30, 2017, subject to any potential changes to committee structure as dictated by any changes to the Mansfield Downtown Partnership's Bylaws. Ms. Pelletier seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

7. Report from Committees

Advertising and Promotion- Celebrate Mansfield Festival Subcommittee

Festival Chair Betsy Paterson said many groups have signed up for a Festival booth. She said the parade has some additions including a fife and drum corps.

Finance and Administration

Interim Chair Matt Hart said the Committee met on June 23 and reviewed several financial reports including those for the Town Square, and the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center. He said the cost over-run was down to approximately \$760,000 from \$1.4 million for the various

infrastructure projects. The over-run is being paid off from Storrs Center revenues and should take 3 to 4 years.

Membership Development

Chair George Jones said the Committee will meet on August 15.

8. Adjourn

Mr. Hart made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Jones seconded the motion. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.